

Three MIT Students Arrested, SAE Faces Possible Sanctions

By Kelley Rivoire
ASSOCIATE NEWS EDITOR

Three MIT students were arrested in December following a party held at a house in Allston in which a majority of the members of the Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity reside.

The Office of Student Discipline is investigating the incident. The results of the investigation will determine whether the Interfraternity Council Judicial Committee Review Board will hold a disciplinary hearing for SAE.

If a hearing is held and SAE is found to have violated IFC rules, sanctions could range from a warning to expulsion, said former IFC JudComm Chair William R. Fowler '05.

IFC President Christopher P. Child '06 said a hearing was likely, but expulsion unlikely.

Party involved underage drinking

The three MIT students, Neil J. Kelly '06, Justin A. Holland '06, and Chandan K. Das '06, were charged with "keeping a disorderly house and procuring alcoholic beverages for persons under the age of 21," according to a Boston Police Press Release dated December 10.

The press release states that officers were called to the house after complaints of a fight. Police then



CHRISTINA KANG—THE TECH

Sigma Alpha Epsilon's temporary house in Allston, MA, was the site of a recent party involving underage drinking. SAE may face sanctions from the Interfraternity Council.

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MIT and City Reach Tax Agreement

By Jenny Zhang
NEWS EDITOR

Last month, MIT signed a 40 year Payment in Lieu of Taxes agreement with the City of Cambridge. Under the terms of the agreement, MIT will increase next

year's base PILOT by 250,000 dollars to 1.5 million dollars, and by 2.5 percent each year thereafter. MIT has also agreed not to abruptly remove large amounts of land from the City's tax rolls, said Executive Vice President John R. Curry.

MIT voluntarily makes a yearly PILOT to Cambridge for tax-exempt academic land. This tradition has existed for about 75 years, according to the Office of Govern-

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CHRISTINA KANG—THE TECH

Jennifer J. Yang '08 creates an upright-style moribana in the Color Scheme Method at the Ikebana class held on Tuesday, Jan. 11. Ikebana is a traditional Japanese art involving cutting and arranging flowers and plants.

Pell Grant Reductions Will Not Affect Aid for MIT Undergraduates

By Beckett W. Sterner
EDITOR IN CHIEF

Undergraduates at MIT will not be affected by the upcoming change in the federal government's formula for calculating financial need.

Director of Financial Aid Daniel Barkowitz said that MIT's formula for determining how much a family can afford to pay for college will not be affected by the change in the federal formula.

Also, MIT will compensate any students receiving federal aid for any differences that result from the change. For example, if the amount a student receives from a Pell Grant, a federal program that helps the neediest families pay for college, decreases, MIT will replace that money with a grant in its financial aid package.

About 600 MIT students receive Pell Grants, Barkowitz said, for a total of about \$1.6 million in aid a year. The change in the government's formula may lead to a decrease of several hundred thousand dollars in funding through students who will no longer qualify or receive smaller grants.

Nationwide, 90,000 college students are expected to no longer qualify for the grants, and 1.3 million will qualify for smaller grants, according to a study by the American Council on Education.

The Department of Education is required by law to update its tax data on how much families pay in state taxes every year. According to the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, however, the financial aid formula was last updated in 1994, using 1988 tax data, because the federal government was not able to obtain

reliable figures.

The *Chronicle* also reported that officials at the University of California system are concerned that the figures the government is using are incorrect, as the California state agency in charge of collecting taxes has reported that families' financial burdens have gone up since the last update.

Advocacy efforts limited

The change in aid has become a controversial issue at a time when many state universities are quickly raising tuition in the face of state budget cuts. Massachusetts will be the eighth-hardest hit state by the change.

"There is a lot of pressure" to change the formula back, Barkowitz said. He said he thought returning to the old funding level was very unlikely, though. "There is not the political will" to put the money behind it, he said.

The Pell Grant program faces a shortfall of approximately 4 billion dollars, which has made many lawmakers reluctant to raise the maximum grant of \$4,050 until the program meets its budget.

The primary reason the formula was updated this year was because the Republican leadership of Congress struck a passage from a spending bill passed in December that would have prevented the Department of Education from changing the formula, according to the *Chronicle*.

Barkowitz said that MIT had done some quiet lobbying in Washington against the change, but also that it is important for students to speak out and make their opinions heard.

Admissions Office Accepts Fewer '09 Early Applicants

By Jiao Wang
STAFF REPORTER

This year, MIT admitted 383 students (13.7 percent) of the early action applicant pool of 2801 for the Class of 2009. Last year, 438 (15.5 percent) of the 2833 early action applicants were accepted.

Last year, 78 percent of the students admitted early action matriculated in the fall. Dean of Admissions Marilee Jones wrote in an e-mail that "this was the highest [yield] we had ever received."

According to Jones, the higher yield was a result of some changes in other schools' admissions policies. Harvard, Stanford, and Yale switched to single choice early action, under which students are not bound to the school they apply to early action, but can only apply to one school early action.

"Major competitor schools... all had early admissions processes that limited early applicants to just their

school," she wrote. This resulted in a decrease in the number of students in the early applicant pool, but an increase in the number of students who were genuinely interested in MIT, thus increasing MIT's yield among early applicants, Jones wrote.

She predicts that there will not be significant changes in yield this year, since admissions policies have generally remained the same as last year.

The Admissions Office does not want more than thirty percent of the incoming class to consist of students who were accepted early, Jones wrote.

In any particular year, anywhere from 5 to 25 percent of the deferred early applicants are admitted in the regular admissions season. Jones wrote that this is dependent on the strength of the

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"Life Aquatic" fails to make waves.

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NEWS

After merger, Ocean Engineering faculty plan out future curricula.

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WORLD & NATION

Iraq to Increase Size of Its Army

By Terence Neilan
THE NEW YORK TIMES

Prime Minister Ayad Allawi of Iraq said Tuesday that his country planned to spend about \$2 billion to increase the size of its army from 100,000 to more than 150,000 in a stepped-up effort to hit back at insurgent forces.

He spoke as another round of violence hit Iraq, with six Iraqi policemen killed when a suicide car bomb exploded at or near a police checkpoint in northern Tikrit, and reports that seven Iraqi civilians had died in a roadside bomb blast south of Baghdad.

Allawi acknowledged that the Iraqi Defense Ministry had re-established a military academy “and other institutions to deal with training issues.”

“We all know that the evil terrorist powers try to destroy the Iraqi structure and economic facilities, and attack the oil facilities,” Allawi told Iraqi soldiers, police officers and reporters in Baghdad.

As a result, he added, “We have to back up the role of the police and expand recruitment to police; we have to increase security protection teams and deploy these forces all over the country.”

Vestiges of Big Bang Sound Waves Found

By Kenneth Chang
THE NEW YORK TIMES

SAN DIEGO

Astronomers reported on Tuesday that they had convincingly seen, in the patterns of galaxies scattered across the night sky, the vestiges of sound waves that rumbled through the universe after the Big Bang.

Stars and galaxies tended to form along the ripples of the sound waves where matter was slightly denser, and the pull of gravity was slightly stronger. The ripples preserve a picture of the universe when it was only about one million years old and fit well with astronomers’ ideas of how the universe, which started smooth and uniform, became lumpy with stars, gas clouds and other celestial objects.

Two teams of researchers analyzing the locations of thousands of galaxies from two sections of the sky reported similar findings on the sound waves at a meeting of the American Astronomical Society here.

Earlier research had found signs of the ripples, but “we regard this as smoking-gun evidence,” said Dr. Daniel Eisenstein of the University of Arizona, lead investigator of one of the teams.

“The important picture we have of the universe is hanging together amazingly well,” said Dr. Martin Rees, the professor of cosmology and astrophysics at Cambridge University who was not involved with either team. “The standard picture is firming up.”

Rescuers Resume Search In California Mudslide

By Nick Madigan and Charlie Leduff
THE NEW YORK TIMES

LA CONCHITA, CALIF.

Rescuers resumed a search for 12 missing people early Tuesday morning, a day after a rain-saturated hillside poured a Mississippi River-like torrent of earth and trees onto four blocks of this ocean-front town.

Three men were confirmed dead.

Most of the rescue workers searching for survivors were sent home Monday night because of fears that continued rains could cause another slide. But a skeleton crew remained on the scene using listening devices and hoping for signs of life under the mud, said a spokeswoman for the Ventura County Fire Department, Michele Fain.

“They did hear some noise,” Fain said. “So we had limited crews working in those areas through the night.”

Fain said that nine people were rescued after Monday’s slide, which left 10 people injured and damaged between 15 and 20 homes.

Homeland Security Secretary Nominee is a Federal Judge

By Richard W. Stevenson
and Eric Lichtblau
THE NEW YORK TIMES

WASHINGTON

President Bush on Tuesday nominated Michael Chertoff, a federal appeals judge and former prosecutor who helped oversee the Justice Department’s anti-terrorism efforts after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, to succeed Tom Ridge as homeland security secretary.

Bush made the announcement a month and a day after his original choice to succeed Ridge, Bernard B. Kerik, the former New York City police commissioner, withdrew his nomination amid legal and ethical questions.

In Chertoff, Bush chose another veteran of law enforcement in the New York metropolitan region who, as the president pointedly noted, has been confirmed three times by the Senate to previous posts, the last in 2003.

“When Mike is confirmed by the Senate, the Department of Homeland Security will be led by a practical organizer, a skilled manager and a brilliant thinker,” Bush said.

He praised Chertoff as having an “impressive record of cutting

through red tape and moving organizations into action.”

In brief remarks, Chertoff recalled helping respond to the Sept. 11 attacks as head of the criminal division at the Justice Department and said that if confirmed, “I will be proud to stand again with the men and women who form our front line against terror.”

Chertoff has a well-documented if at times controversial record on issues related to fighting terrorism. As the Justice Department, he favored aggressive steps like holding Muslim immigrants for questioning and passage of the USA Patriot Act to give the government more anti-terrorism tools.

In 2003, he argued before a federal appeals court that a terrorism suspect who faces a federal trial, Zacarias Moussaoui, was not entitled to question an operative of al-Qaida who was held overseas as an enemy combatant.

Moussaoui’s case, which has stalled, and the collapse of a terrorism case in Detroit amid charges of prosecutorial misconduct, are among the few missteps in a record that includes the successful prosecutions of John Walker Lindh, an American captured in Afghanistan,

and accused Qaida sympathizers in Lackawanna, N.Y.

Since leaving the Justice Department, Chertoff has questioned the administration’s policy of holding enemy combatants indefinitely without charge or trial.

“We need to debate a long-term and sustainable architecture for the process of determining when, why and for how long someone may be detained as an enemy combatant, and what judicial review should be available,” he wrote in *The Weekly Standard* in December 2003. Chertoff was the administration’s leading prosecutor on corporate fraud, spearheading the case in the Enron scandal that led to the collapse of Arthur Andersen, the accounting firm. At one point, the White House considered appointing him to head the Securities and Exchange Commission.

At the Homeland Security Department, Chertoff will confront a sprawling bureaucracy created out of 22 agencies to protect against another terrorist strike. Ridge, a former Republican governor of Pennsylvania who informed Bush after the election that he intended to step down, was widely credited with getting the department up and running.

Prime Minister Deems Pockets Of Iraq Too Perilous for Voters

By Dexter Filkins
THE NEW YORK TIMES

BAGHDAD, IRAQ

Prime Minister Ayad Allawi acknowledged for the first time on Tuesday that “pockets” of Iraq would be too dangerous for voters to cast ballots in the election this month, as insurgents continued their effort to disrupt the campaign, killing at least 15 Iraqis and attacking one of the country’s main election offices.

In a televised address, Allawi said he hoped that American and Iraqi security forces would be able to pacify many of the country’s most chaotic areas before the Jan. 30 vote. By election day, he said, the areas too dangerous for voting would probably be limited in number and small.

“Hostile forces are trying to hin-

der this event,” he said. “Certainly, there will be some pockets where people will not be able to participate in the elections, but we do not think it will be widespread.”

Allawi’s statement is his first public acknowledgement that some areas of Iraq will probably prove too violent to support the nationwide election, the centerpiece of the American effort to bring democracy and stability to this restive land.

Last week, the commander of American ground forces here, Lt. Gen. Thomas Metz, said parts of four Iraqi provinces, most of them dominated by Sunni Arabs, were not yet safe enough for voting. But he also said the military would continue to focus on halting violence in those areas in time for the election.

The acknowledgement by Allawi comes amid a major escalation of violence by the insurgents, who have killed more than 100 Iraqi police officers and soldiers this month, and who have begun to employ larger and more sophisticated bombs to kill American soldiers.

On Monday, guerrillas assassinated Baghdad’s deputy police chief, and in another attack, killed two American soldiers.

Guerrillas are warning Iraqis to stay away from the polls, and American and Iraqi leaders fear that election day could be the occasion for a bloody onslaught. At least seven Iraqi election workers and at least two candidates for the national assembly have been killed in recent days.

WEATHER

Warmer, But Wet

By Michael J. Ring
STAFF METEOROLOGIST

Our weather is going to turn unsettled but warmer over the next few days, while the West finally receives a needed break after being battered by a winter storm.

The main low pressure system moving northeastward across North America is accompanied by several fronts, which will make forecasting our temperatures for the next few days quite tricky. Last night’s snow should change to sleet early this morning and rain today as a warm front approaches us from the west. Fronts are identified by the air masses in their wake, so as the warm front passes over us temperatures will rise. The main passage of this front should occur Wednesday night, leaving Thursday as an unseasonably warm day, with highs possibly approaching 60°F (16°C).

Such unusual temperatures will only last one day, however, as a cold front trailing behind the storm passes through the region on Friday morning. In the wake of this second front temperatures will return to their normal January values for the weekend, although the clear skies forecast for Saturday and Sunday offer some consolation after several days of intermittent rain.

Extended Forecast:

Today: Freezing rain changing to rain. High near 40°F (6°C).

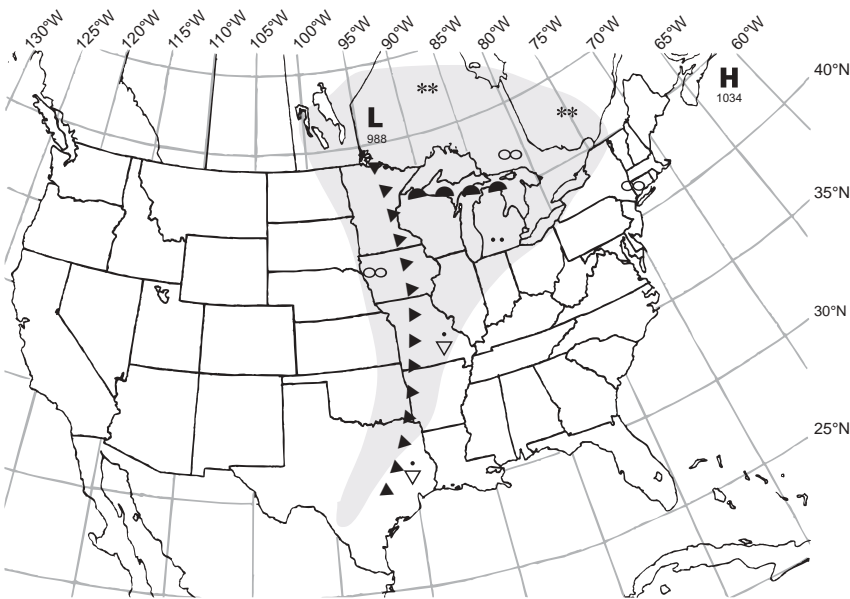
Tonight: Cloudy with rain showers and mild, with temperatures holding near 40°F (6°C).

Tomorrow: Cloudy with rain showers, and unseasonably warm. High near 58°F (14°C). Low near 45°F (8°C).

Friday: Showers ending, then clearing. High near 50°F (10°C), but falling temperatures in the afternoon. Low near 27°C (-3°C).

Saturday and Sunday: Sunny but seasonably cold. Highs near freezing. Lows near 20°F (-7°C).

Situation for Noon Eastern Standard Time, Wednesday, January 12, 2005



| Weather Systems | Weather Fronts | Precipitation Symbols | Other Symbols |
|------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|---------------|
| H High Pressure | Trough | Snow | Fog |
| L Low Pressure | Warm Front | Rain | Thunderstorm |
| Hurricane | Cold Front | Light | Haze |
| | Stationary Front | Moderate | |
| | | Heavy | |

Compiled by MIT Meteorology Staff and The Tech

Drug Makers to Give Uninsured Lower Prices for Prescriptions

By Robert Pear

THE NEW YORK TIMES

WASHINGTON

Ten major pharmaceutical companies said on Tuesday that they were joining in a new program to cut 25 percent to 40 percent from the retail prices of prescription drugs sold to uninsured people of modest means younger than 65.

The drug makers, like many Democrats in Congress, painted a grim picture of life without health insurance, saying that millions of Americans went without life-saving drugs because they lacked coverage.

People who enroll in the new program, known as Together Rx Access, will receive plastic cards that can be used to obtain substantial savings at local drugstores.

The program is the latest effort by drug makers to meet public demand for their products while dispelling public anger about the prices.

The federal government has no role in the program, but Tommy G.

Thompson, the secretary of health and human services, joined drug company executives at a news conference announcing the initiative.

“I’m sure there are some cynics out there who will say that this is not enough,” Thompson said. “But it’s an exciting opportunity to provide more people with access to prescription medicines.”

The number of uninsured Americans has been rising at a brisk pace, reaching 45 million in 2003, the last year for which official figures are available. Sponsors of the new card estimated that 36 million of those uninsured would be eligible for it.

But experience with other discount cards, including those endorsed by the government for Medicare beneficiaries, suggests that the number of those who sign up will be much lower.

Many consumers say they have been confused by similar cards and disappointed with the savings.

Pfizer already offers a 30-day supply of many of its drugs to cer-

tain Medicare beneficiaries for a flat fee of \$15, about a fifth of the average price charged to a person with no insurance.

J. Patrick Kelly, a vice president of Pfizer, said the existing card “has not had a material impact” on the company’s earnings.

He added that “we do not expect the Together Rx Access card” to have an adverse effect on earnings either.

“As much as we want people to take advantage of these programs,” Kelly said, “the uptake has been slow.”

Several consumer groups voiced support for the new program, while emphasizing that it was no substitute for comprehensive health insurance.

The new program offers savings on 275 drugs including Crestor and Lipitor, for high cholesterol; Norvasc, for high blood pressure; Nexium, for heartburn and ulcers; Viagra, for erectile dysfunction; and Zoloft and Paxil, for depression.

Unexpected DNA Advance Offers Higher Bioterrorism Capabilities

By Nicholas Wade

THE NEW YORK TIMES

Researchers have made an unexpectedly sudden advance in synthesizing long molecules of DNA, bringing them closer to the goal of redesigning genes and programming cells to make pharmaceuticals.

The success also puts within reach the manufacture of small genomes, like those of viruses and perhaps certain bacteria. Some biologists fear that the technique may be used to make the genome of the smallpox virus, one of the few pathogens that cannot easily be collected from the wild.

The advance, described in the Jan. 6 issue of the journal Nature by Dr. George M. Church of the Harvard Medical School and Dr. Xiaolian Gao of the University of Houston, involves the use of a new technique to synthesize a DNA molecule 14,500 chemical units in length. The molecule contained a string of 21 genes used by a harmless laboratory bacterium.

The full power of the technique is still being explored, but genomes like that of the smallpox virus — 186,000 chemical units long — seem well within reach. Church has completed the first part of a plan to synthesize the 777,000-unit genome

of a small bacterium known as Mycoplasma mobile.

“This has the potential for a revolutionary impact in the ease of synthesis of large DNA molecules,” said Dr. Richard Ebright, a molecular biologist at Rutgers University with an interest in bioterrorism.

“This will permit efficient and rapid synthesis of any select agent virus genome in very short order,” he added, referring to the list of dangerous pathogens and toxins that must be registered with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Ebright said any facility possessing the new DNA synthesis equipment should be assumed capable of making any virus on the select agent list.

The genetic sequences of smallpox and many other dangerous pathogens are easily obtained because they were deposited in public databases as an aid to medical researchers at a time when synthesizing large DNA molecules seemed prohibitively expensive or impossible.

Church is developing automated methods of DNA synthesis for a variety of research purposes including vaccines and pharmaceutical production. He has no interest in

synthesizing dangerous pathogens but is aware of the technique’s potential for misuse.

Last year he proposed that the machines and ingredients for synthesizing DNA should be controlled, with manufacturers selling supplies only to facilities whose DNA machines had been registered. The manufacturers have expressed willingness to adopt the proposal, Church said in an e-mail message, “but it would be reassuring to get some official governmental support.”

Some experts say bioterrorists will find it much easier to collect pathogens in the wild than to synthesize the organisms’ genetic material. But this is less of an option for smallpox, now officially held by only two laboratories in the world, and for the increasingly rare polio virus.

In part to draw attention to the dangers of bioterrorism, Dr. Eckard Wimmer of the State University of New York at Stony Brook spent three years synthesizing DNA corresponding to the 7,500 units of polio virus, a feat he announced in July 2002. “It will be possible in 10 to 15 years to make smallpox,” Wimmer told the Knight Ridder/Tribune Business News at the time.

Ridge Announces High State of Alert For Bush’s Inauguration Next Week

By David Johnston and Michael Janofsky

THE NEW YORK TIMES

WASHINGTON

Tom Ridge, the secretary of homeland security, said Tuesday that even in the absence of any specific security threat to next week’s presidential inauguration, civilian and military forces had been ordered to an extraordinarily high state of alert.

“You can well imagine that the security for this occasion will be unprecedented,” Ridge said at a news conference. “Protective measures will be seen. There will be quite a few that are not seen. Our goal is that any attempt on the part of anyone or any group to disrupt the inaugural will be repelled by multiple layers of security.”

In his first detailed outline of inaugural security planning, Ridge said that more than 6,000 civilian and military personnel trained in crisis response, crowd control and dignitary security will be in place

with thousands more available to respond if necessary.

At the heart of the plan are a series of tightly controlled security zones that will restrict pedestrian and vehicle access to the streets around the Capitol, where President Bush will be sworn in and over the route of the traditional parade along Pennsylvania Avenue to the White House.

In advance of inaugural events, security teams will sweep through hotels and office buildings along the parade route, in some cases barring office workers from sitting near windows overlooking the procession.

Even now, security teams are testing the safety of food that will be served to Bush and other guests at inaugural events. Caterers are being instructed to arrive for work at 7 p.m. the night before the inauguration.

For next Thursday’s swearing-in ceremonies, sniper teams will be in position on rooftops. Specialists in chemical, biological and radiologi-

cal terrorism will mingle with the crowds, carrying hand-held detection devices designed to pick up any sign of unconventional weapons. Squads of plainclothes agents, with federal prosecutors among them, will move along the parade route scouting for potential problems. Armed Coast Guard boats will patrol the Potomac River.

Security will be tighter than at recent high-profile events like last year’s political conventions. “Our system of government is rooted in the sovereign principle of democratic authority bestowed by the people,” Ridge said. “And the people, both the inauguration participants and city residents, are resolved to go forward with an event that so deeply reflects that ideal.”

Ridge said the security for the inauguration will cost millions of dollars but said he did not know the total amount. Costs have created at least one conflict between the federal government and the District of Columbia.

U.S. And Russia Seek Limits On Portable Missiles

By Thom Shanker

THE NEW YORK TIMES

WASHINGTON

The United States and Russia are close to signing an agreement to help control the trafficking of shoulder-fired anti-aircraft missiles, a weapon highly prized by terrorists, the Russian defense minister said during a visit here on Tuesday.

The minister, Sergei B. Ivanov, said the deal had been negotiated rapidly over the past several months, and he predicted that “this agreement is sure to be signed pretty soon.”

During a joint news conference, neither Ivanov nor Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld provided details on the agreement.

Ivanov, however, broadly indicated that the agreement would call for exchanging information between the countries on the production, current arsenals and export of the weapon.

Military officials say the missiles, officially called Man-Portable Air Defense Systems, or Manpads, are valued by terrorists. The weapons could be used to shoot down a commercial airliner, a military passenger plane or helicopter ferrying government and military personnel.

Last year, American intelligence agencies tripled their formal estimate of the number of shoulder-fired missile systems believed to be at large worldwide, after determining that at least 4,000 of the weapons in Iraq’s prewar arsenals could not be accounted for.

Impact of Submarine Grounding Injured Much of Crew

By Christopher Drew

THE NEW YORK TIMES

The nuclear submarine that ran aground Saturday in the South Pacific hit so “incredibly hard” that about 60 of its 137 crew members were injured and the sailor who died was thrown 20 feet by the impact, according to internal Navy e-mail messages sent by a top admiral.

The messages said the submarine’s hull was severely damaged after the head-on crash into what Navy officials believe was an undersea mountain that was not on the navigation charts. One message said the submarine, the San Francisco, was traveling at high speed, and the impact practically stopped it in its tracks and caused flooding in parts of the bow.

The messages were written by Rear Adm. Paul F. Sullivan, the commander of submarines in the Pacific. They paint a more dire picture of the accident, which occurred 360 miles southeast of Guam, than had previously been disclosed. They also hint at the extensive efforts to steady the vessel and save the sailor who died.

The e-mail messages indicated that the Navy had tried to evacuate the fatally injured man, Joseph A. Ashley, within hours after he had been thrown forward and hit his head on a metal pump, which knocked him unconscious.

Ashley’s father, Daniel L. Ashley, said in an interview he had been told that as a helicopter hovered over the choppy seas, crew members could not maneuver a stretcher carrying his son through the submarine’s hatches before he died.

“They tried numerous times to maneuver him through various hatches,” Ashley said. “But it just didn’t happen.”

Pope Denounces Gay Marriage

By Jason Horowitz

THE NEW YORK TIMES

VATICAN CITY

Pope John Paul II unequivocally condemned gay marriage and weighed in on a host of other social questions on Monday in a strongly worded message meant to define the position and agenda of the Roman Catholic Church.

The 84-year-old pope addressed the 174 ambassadors who make up the diplomatic corps accredited to the Holy See with an incisive account of the Vatican’s definition of family.

“Today the family is often threatened by social and cultural pressures that tend to undermine its stability; but in some countries the family is also threatened by legislation which — at times directly — challenge its natural structure, which is and must necessarily be that of a union between a man and a woman founded on marriage,” said the pope, who spoke in French.

Family, he said, “must never be undermined by laws based on a narrow and unnatural vision of man.”

In recent months, senior Vatican officials have increasingly attacked what they see as the decaying of Christian tradition.

In October, the Vatican rallied around Rocco Buttiglione, an Italian minister whose effort to win a post in the European Union was rejected after he expressed his conservative Catholic views, such as considering homosexuality a sin.

Taser Shares Drop on Disclosure Of Possible Slowing Of Sales

By Reed Abelson and Alex Berenson

THE NEW YORK TIMES

Taser International said Tuesday that its sales might slow in the next six months because of increased competition for its electric guns, which are used by many police departments.

Taser stock plunged almost 30 percent after the announcement, which the company made in a letter to shareholders. Shares closed at \$14.10, down \$5.95, or 29.7 percent.

The company did not offer exact guidance for its sales but said that it expected some orders might be delayed as police departments evaluated other weapons against its guns. The guns, called Tasers, fire electrified barbs up to 21 feet, stunning their targets with a powerful shock.

The announcement on Tuesday added to investors’ concerns about the company. After being one of the best performing stocks in 2003 and 2004, Taser has lost 60 percent of its value this year.

The company faces an informal inquiry by the Securities and Exchange Commission, concerns about the safety of its weapons and questions about a deal in December that some analysts say might have been made to mask slowing sales.

OPINION



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Voting with a Checkbook

Ruth Miller

If a rational person is presented two options, they will weigh the costs and benefits associated with each option and make their choice. But what happens when a person is given more options? Or multi-faceted options? Or must allocate a limited number of resources between various causes? How does a population distribute its attention amongst competing, and often very different, choices? Why, the free market, but of course.

The “market politics” that President Bush espouses are rooted in the idea that some things sound good, and will always garner public support, but when you start talking dollars and cents, people get serious. Take for example, free range cattle. It sounds like a good idea, and you’d be hard pressed to find someone that openly supports inhumane livestock conditions. Attitudes change when you assign prices, and people find that their idealist cause is more expensive. How much more are you willing to pay to support free range cattle? Money makes people serious and can separate the touchy-feely fluff from the meat and potatoes.

The free market struck a huge victory in Texas last month when a woman received the world’s first cloned-to-order cat. The new owner, suffering the loss of her cat of 17 years, plopped down \$50,000 for a clone, named Little Nicky in memorandum of its predecessor.

Were people upset by this? You bet. There doesn’t seem to be a shortage of things for critics to tear apart.

First, this is cloning, and we know how people feel about “playing God.” This argument is old hat. There’s not a whole lot that can be done to prevent this, since the creators of Little Nicky are a private company, and no tax dollars were attached to the kitten. Even if cloning-to-order is banned in the U.S., the kitten’s sizeable price tag suggests the target

demographic will be able to track down this service around the globe.

Second, and my personal favorite, critics are offended at the name of the company that created Little Nicky — Genetic Savings and Clone. What does this tell the American youth? If you grow up, find a niche, and pioneer a field, people will attack every facet of your creativity. These are undoubtedly the same people from my high school that giggled behind the back of Anita Johnson.

Third, and most vocal, people find this to be wasteful. Some say the money should have been used to take care of some of the thousands of strays that are put down every year. Others frown at the creation of new methods of animal production, given the overpopulation problems existing today. Still others complain that this technology is unfair, given that only the very well off can afford such a procedure, and the less fortunate must bereave without the same opportunity.

You mean someone is wasting money on something they don’t need? That money could be better spent somewhere else? Worse of all, are you saying this is unfair to poor people? Is that discrimination? Obligated to the underdog, these are the things liberals say as they dig their political graves.

Promises of handouts and free rides just don’t make sense when they face the free market system. If you’ve got \$50,000 to spend on a cat, you’re welcome to do it. No one can tell you to spend your hard-earned income/gift-wrapped trust fund on something smart. Take that \$50,000 and blow it on a cat. Or a dollar-sign shaped pool. Or lots of shoes. It’s your right as an American. That’s why it’s called “disposable income” — you’re welcome to throw it away.

Maybe you don’t have \$50,000? This isn’t discrimination; it’s just accepting the true meaning of wants versus needs. Maybe you’ve got \$50,000 and think a clone-to-order cat is stupid. That’s well within your right, too.

A private company found a niche and is responding appropriately. If it can find private investors to fund their follies, and consumers willing to pay the price, why shouldn’t it be able to provide this demanded if not frivolous product?

Furthermore, the work of Genetic Savings and Clone isn’t entirely wasteful. The process of cloning doesn’t have a great success rate, and part of that \$50,000 goes to spay clinics to buy ovaries, directly helping unwanted pets. It’s difficult to believe that funneling money into research, even frivolous research, won’t have any positive implications in other fields. Cloned animals have higher chances to develop cancer, and this is something that the likes of Genetic Savings and Clone and the less creatively named ViaGen are working to fight. We may not be able to guess the fringe discoveries made in clone-to-order research, but hey, if NASA gave us the ball-point pen, who knows that Genetic Savings and Clone will bring?

Genetic Savings and Clone is hoping to pioneer an industry in cat and canine cloning. While some critics are shocked and appalled, I applaud. If the idea can’t solicit enough investors and consumers, then the industry will inevitably fail. If the idea is strong, demand will rise, prices will fall, and the company will succeed. It all comes down to consumer preferences. It’s the most elegant and pure form of election — putting your money where your mouth is and voting with a checkbook.

That’s why it’s called “disposable income” — you’re welcome to throw it away.

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Editorials are the official opinion of *The Tech*. They are written by the editorial board, which consists of the chairman, editor in chief, managing editor, opinion editors, a senior editor, and an opinion staffer.

Dissents are the opinions of signed members of the editorial board choosing to publish their disagreement with the editorial.

Letters to the editor, columns, and editorial cartoons are written by individuals and represent the opinion of the author, not necessarily that of the newspaper. Electronic submissions are encouraged and should be sent to letters@the-tech.mit.edu. Hard copy submissions should be addressed to *The Tech*, P.O. Box 397029, Cambridge, Mass. 02139-7029, or sent by interdepartmental mail to Room W20-483. All submissions are due by 4:30 p.m. two days before the date of publication.

Letters, columns, and cartoons must bear the authors’ signatures, addresses, and phone numbers. Unsigned letters will not be accepted.

The Tech reserves the right to edit or condense letters; shorter letters will be given higher priority. Once submitted, all letters become property of *The Tech*, and will not be returned. *The Tech* makes no commitment to publish all the letters received.

Guest columns are opinion articles submitted by members of the MIT or local community and have the author’s name in italics. Columns without italics are written by *Tech* staff.

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The Tech’s telephone number is (617) 253-1541. E-mail is the easiest way to reach any member of our staff. If you are unsure whom to contact, send mail to general@the-tech.mit.edu, and it will be directed to the appropriate person. Please send press releases, requests for coverage, and information about errors that call for correction to news@the-tech.mit.edu. Letters to the editor should be sent to letters@the-tech.mit.edu. *The Tech* can be found on the World Wide Web at <http://the-tech.mit.edu>.

ARTS

The Real Jacques Cousteau Was Better

“The Life Aquatic” Has Humor But Lets It Get Away

By Beckett W. Sterner
EDITOR IN CHIEF
The Life Aquatic with Steve Zissou
Directed by Wes Anderson
Written by Wes Anderson and Noah Baum-
bach
Starring Bill Murray, Owen Wilson, Cate
Blanchett, Jeff Goldblum, Anjelica Huston
Rated R

The Life Aquatic with Steve Zissou” is a movie that aims high and leaves you with the feeling something deep just happened, and that you missed it. As a product of director Wes Anderson, “Life Aquatic” is stylistically similar to his previous movie “The Royal Tenenbaums,” and the movie’s characters have the same strongly etched but curiously shallow personalities. While the movie does have undeniably funny moments, you’re more likely to leave the theater with a vaguely pleasant but empty feeling than with a smile.

In what is an alternate universe of the voyages of Jacques Cousteau, Steve Zissou (Bill Murray) leads a motley crew of untrained volunteers across the oceans producing endearingly overscripted documentaries, which he then brings back to an elite, upper-crust audience whose approval serves as a bell-weather for the documentary’s general success. “Life Aquatic” opens with the premiere of Zissou’s most recent documentary, which centers on the death of Zissou’s best friend and first mate who was eaten by a giant “jaguar shark” during filming. The premiere is a flop, marking a new low in a long slump for the crew, but Zissou walks away with a new quest: To find and kill the jaguar shark, which will be the centerpiece for his next documentary.

Most of the best humor in the movie comes from the absurdity of the otherwise washed up and old Zissou, played in a wonderfully understated fashion by Murray. Zissou’s attempt at action stunts are absurdly

funny, such as his commando raid on a desert island to rescue a “bond company stooge” who had joined their crew as a condition for financing the team. Similarly, when Zissou’s ship is being attacked by pirates, the film abruptly takes on a reddish tint when he finally snaps and pulls off a 007 one-man army attack. After seeing that, I would nominate Murray as a candidate for the next Bond, just to see him act through another kamikaze blitz.

Balancing Zissou’s quest is a budding romance between Jane (Cate Blanchett), a disillusioned and pregnant reporter traveling on the ship to write a story about Zissou, and Ned (Owen Wilson), an innocent but passionate airline pilot from the Midwest who may be Zissou’s son. In fact, Ned seems to serve a dual purpose in the film by helping both Zissou and Jane rekindle their passion about writing or making documentaries, his energy for life rubbing off on them and giving their lives new personal meaning.

Unfortunately, “Life Aquatic,” just like “Tenenbaums,” relies on an internal narrative device to breeze through all the nitty-gritty of introducing characters and background information. The canned introductions of the documentary film gives us short and incisive introductions to all the characters and their quirks, as well as a slightly disconcerting tour of the ship in cutaway form that you later realize is an actual set for the movie. As in

“Tenenbaums,” where characters were introduced from the perspective of a story by one of the (very cynical) children, Anderson’s artifices cut through a lot of otherwise necessary background dialogue, but leave the characters somewhat bereft of any depth or mystery. The people in his movie tend to have two or three clearly defined traits or quirks, leaving little room for the subtlety and complexity of a more convincing personality.

In the end, “Life Aquatic” is an occasionally amusing movie with a few too many slow moments or bits of unconvincing dialogue. Perhaps intentionally, some of the most entertaining moments occur when we actually see sealife, done in a glittery, stop-motion animation style. These seconds of unexpected beauty were just enough to remind me why, in the end, the real Cousteau was more interesting.



BUENA VISTA PICTURES

Jane (Cate Blanchett) interviews Steve Zissou (Bill Murray) about the documentaries he’s made.

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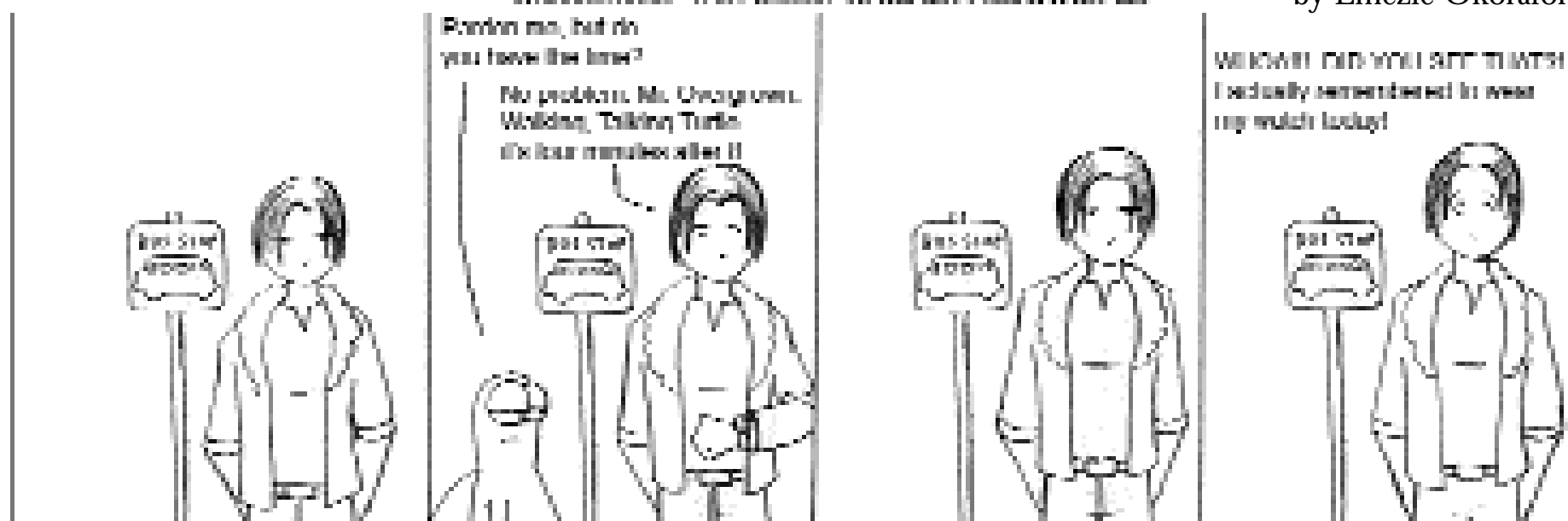
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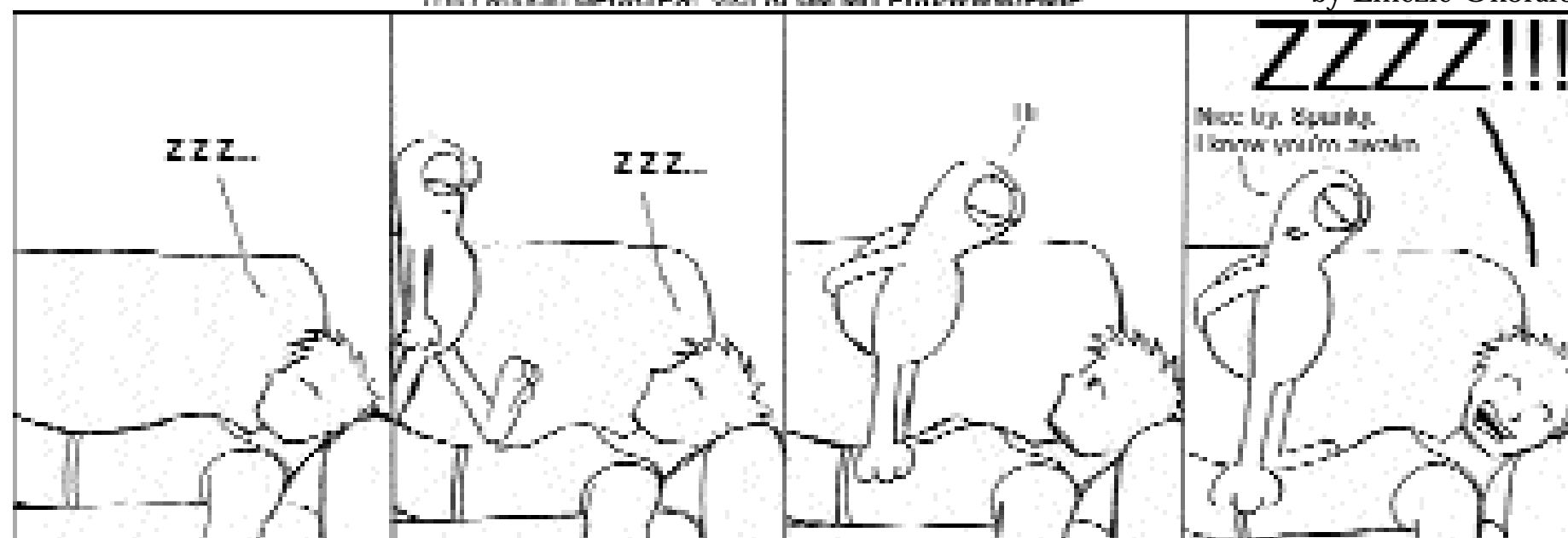
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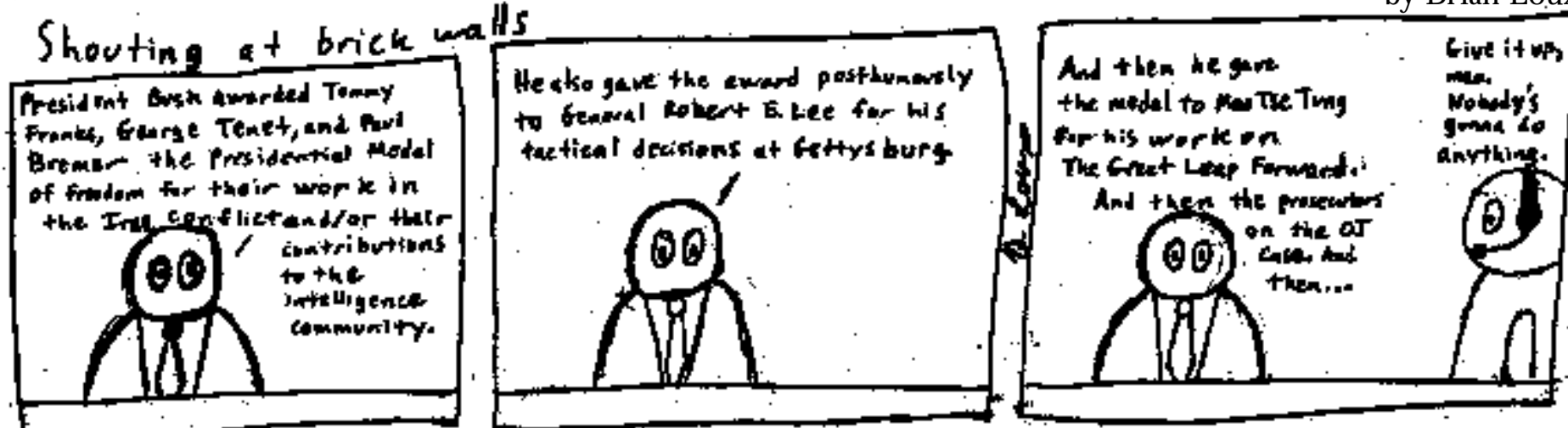
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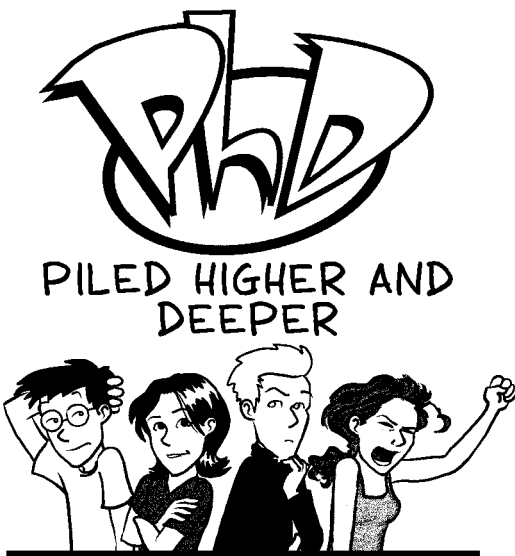


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Crossword Puzzle

Solution, page 13

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Office of Admissions Places Emphasis on Passionate Students

Admissions, from Page 1

cation,” she wrote.

applicant pool.

Applicants with passion sought

Increasingly in the admissions process at MIT, academic distinction has become so common that the admissions staff now measures applicants with a new yard-stick, the so-called “passion index,” Jones wrote. The index is used only in a small number of cases to distinguish between candidates.

Many of the applicants accepted through early action managed to demonstrate in their applications “a resonance for MIT,” wrote Jones. “We want students who will thrive at MIT, students who are willing to risk, who are self-driven and who have an emotional flexibility to tolerate the rigors of an analytical edu-

Overcrowding not expected

The Admissions Office is purposely admitting fewer early action students this year to ensure that the class of 2009 will stay within its target size, Jones wrote.

Last year, MIT admitted a total of 16,055 students, 1,081 of which came. That was about sixty students more than the admissions office had anticipated and the excess resulted in overcrowded dormitories.

The desired enrollment is determined by the Enrollment Management Committee. “The target enrollment... is based on the number of beds in the dorms and FSILG’s,” said Chancellor Phillip L. Clay, one of the members on the committee. “In any given year, the number is not permanently set.”

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Lack of Response by SAE Delays Process, Hearing is Expected

SAE, from Page 1

asked Das to clear the house, but saw no one exit. Upon entering the house, police found numerous empty alcohol containers and about 35 people, many hiding in closets. Two underage party attendees admitted that they had been served alcohol. Police also found a document describing the SAE induction ceremony.

The students were arraigned at Brighton District Court, where a pre-trial conference scheduled is scheduled for Jan. 31.

Kelly, Holland, and Das could not be reached for comment.

Investigation of SAE underway

The IFC received the complaint from the police report, said Fowler.

The IFC JudComm Chair and William M. Fischer, associate dean of student conduct and risk management, decided to pursue an investigation of the incident, which is currently being handled by the Office of Student Discipline, said Child.

The investigation centers around possible violations of IFC risk management policy and underage drinking, said current IFC JudComm Chair Robert D. Batten '06.

"SAE has yet to respond" to the

investigation, Batten said, slowing down the process. "Hopefully we get a response," he said, but "if not, we still move forward," likely at the end of this week.

When the investigation is complete, Fischer and Batten will decide whether the IFC JudComm Review Board, composed of five members of five different fraternities, should hold a hearing about whether there was a violation, Fowler said. Should the fraternity be found guilty of a violation, four types of sanctions could be imposed, ranging from a warning lasting 30 days to expulsion of the fraternity from the IFC, he said.

Because SAE is an associate member of the IFC rather than a full member, the IFC Presidents' Council also has the power to expel the fraternity. Child said that the results of any hearing held "would come into play" in the decision of the President's Council.

Batten said he hopes that any hearing would be completed by the end of the month so that the Presidents' Council can discuss possible sanctions for SAE at its first meeting in February.

Joseph P. Carlucci '05, who was president of SAE last fall, could not be reached for comment.



CHRISTINA KANG—THE TECH

Kevin Bong '05 answers questions about a computer motherboard during the Independent Activities Period Computer Refurbishing Class held on Tuesday, Jan. 11. The class was sponsored by CommuniTech@MIT, a program of the MIT Public Service Center.

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Solution to Crossword

from page 7

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Contract Limits the Rate Property May Become Tax Exempt

PILOT, from Page 1

ment and Community Relations Web site.

Payments to increase

In the past, MIT has not been bound by requirements on the amount of PILOT per year, but under the new agreement, PILOT must increase by 20 percent to 1.5 million for fiscal year 2005, which spans from July 2004 to June 2005.

The agreed upon rate of increase of payments, 2.5 percent per year, is in line with what MIT has done in the past, Curry said.

In addition, under the agreement MIT will follow a “phase-out” procedure for taking property off the tax rolls, said Sarah E. Gallop, Co-Director of the Office of Government and Community Relations. This happens when MIT chooses to convert commercial, taxable land to academic, tax-exempt land.

Under the new agreement, there will be a four-year plan for conversion where MIT will pay 100, 66, 33, and finally zero percent of the commercial land taxes, Gallop said.

In the past, when MIT had taken such land off the tax base, it would discontinue paying commercial property taxes immediately and instead use PILOT for the newly academic land.

The phasing procedure “gives the city time to plan” for the loss of this source of taxes instead of causing a sudden blow, Curry said.

In addition, over the next 10 years, MIT may only remove 2.5 percent of the city’s tax base by converting commercial property to academic, with a maximum of 0.5 percent per year, Curry said.

If MIT chose to exceed this

limit, it would be required by the agreement to continue paying real estate taxes increasing at a rate of three percent per year, Gallop said. She said she did not anticipate MIT needing to exceed the limits.

“We will take advantage of space on campus” which MIT already is not paying property taxes for, Curry said. For example, there are old parking garages and buildings around MIT Medical that could be developed, he said.

If there were a “strategic need for space” that is currently commercial, he said, there would be no hesitation to use it for academic purposes under the conditions of the new agreement, he said.

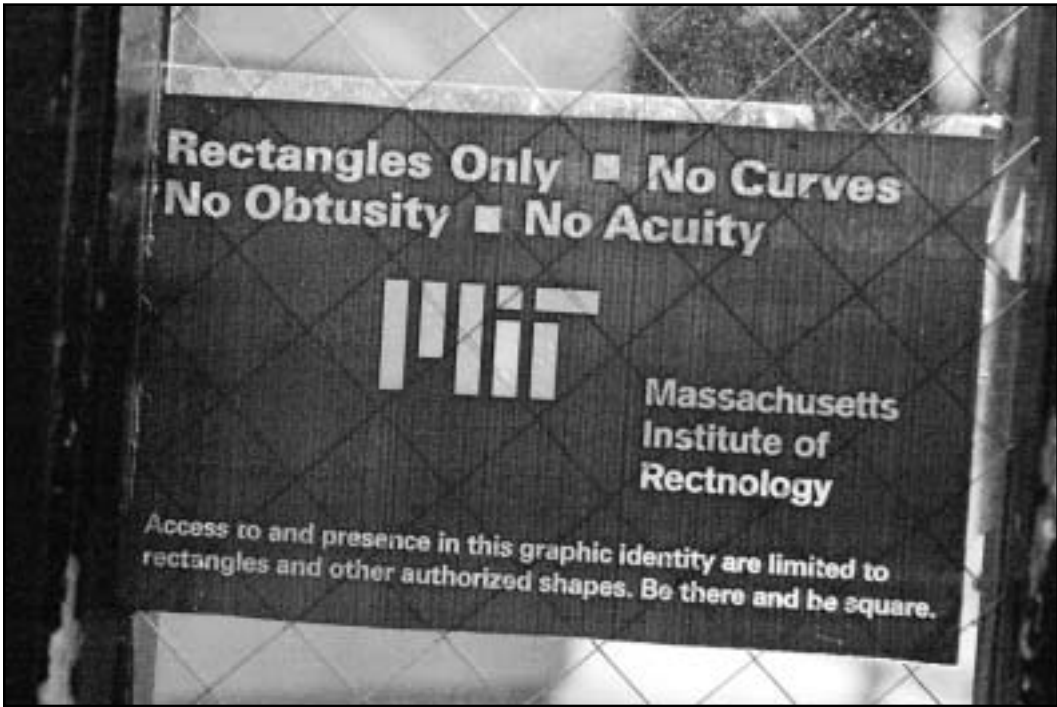
MIT aims to be “good citizen”

MIT agreed to the new conditions for PILOT because the “city asked us,” said Gallop. MIT must “act as a good citizen... we have a responsibility,” she said.

The concern first arose several years go when MIT purchased Technology Square. This created concerns that Cambridge would suddenly lose a sizeable amount of commercial, taxable property if MIT were to use it for academic purposes, Gallop said.

Curry said MIT does not want to “frighten the city,” and the new agreement guarantees that MIT will not suddenly cause the city to lose large amounts of taxable property. The well-being of Cambridge translates to the well-being of MIT, he said.

The conditions are effective for the next 10 years and then may be renewed three more times, Curry said. The additional payments will come out of the General Institute Budget, he said.



OMARI STEPHENS—THE TECH

A play on MIT’s authorized building access postings, this inconspicuous hack appeared on a Building 26 doorway sometime Sunday night, Dec. 12.



CHRISTINA KANG—THE TECH

Members of MIT Sport Taekwondo stretch out their muscles after a workout on Monday, Jan. 10. The class was open to beginners and other interested students.

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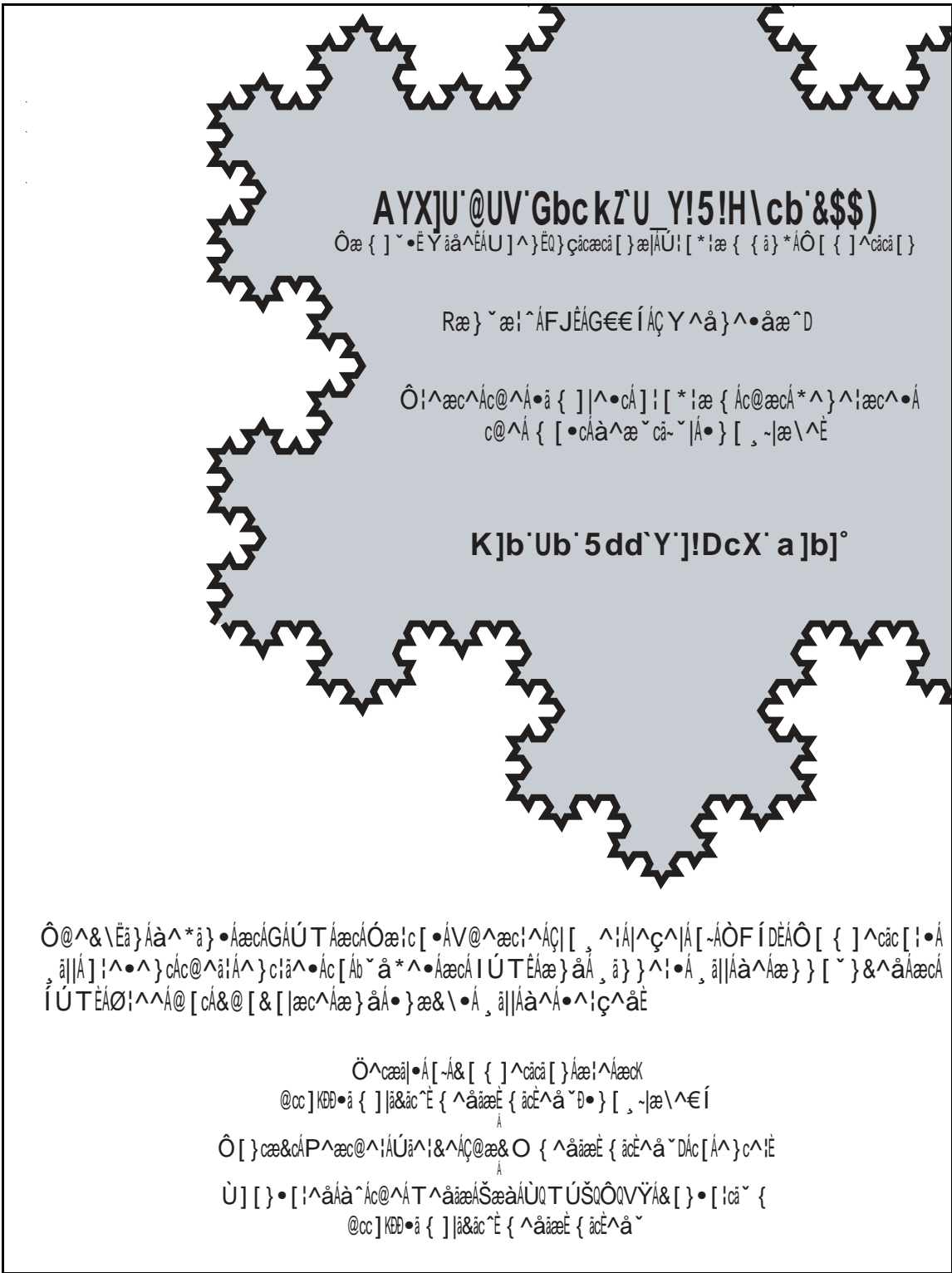
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OE, MechE Merger Takes Effect; Degree Substitute Proposed

By Kelley Rivoire
ASSOCIATE NEWS EDITOR

The merger between the Ocean Engineering department and the Mechanical Engineering department, which took effect on Jan. 1, is progressing well, said Rohan Abeyaratne, department head of Mechanical Engineering.

Major administrative changes have been completed and academic changes are planned for next fall, he said.

The merged department is now seeking approval for a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical and Ocean Engineering, which would replace the Ocean Engineering bachelor's degree. The degree programs available prior to the merger, however, will remain available to all current undergraduate students, Abeyaratne said.

No academic changes, including registration procedures, will occur this spring.

Some changes for degree programs

The department is presently rewriting the bulletin, with completion slated for this summer, said Nicholas M. Patrikalakis, associate department head of Mechanical Engineering.

Once changes are made over the next one or two years, the undergraduate subjects in ocean engineering will be five core subjects and one higher level subject in acoustics, approximately half of the present offerings, Patrikalakis said.

Abeyaratne hopes the proposed undergraduate degree in Mechanical and Ocean Engineering "might be attractive to a larger number of students" than the ocean engineering degree is because of its breadth.

The graduate subjects will remain unchanged. Graduate degree programs unaffected by the merger will be recommended by the new department, he said.

New group, center for OE

An Ocean Engineering Group within the merged department has

been formed and will have representation in the departmental council, the governing body of the Department of Mechanical Engineering.

A departmental Center for Ocean Engineering has also been formed for research in ocean engineering, Abeyaratne said. The "center will keep the identity" of ocean engineering at MIT, he said, and will serve as a visible presence, particularly online, for ocean engineering at MIT.

A proposed interdisciplinary Center for Ocean Science and Engineering is still in the preliminary stages, he said.

In addition, for the next year and likely the following year, funding will be available for graduate students to have advisors in both mechanical and ocean engineering.

Different cultures biggest obstacle

"Getting used to the cultures of each other" will be the most difficult part of the merger, Abeyaratne said, as the Department of Ocean Engineering was small enough to involve all faculty members in decisions, whereas more delegation occurs in the Department of Mechanical Engineering.

A departmental retreat is planned for later this month, and is "meant for us to get to know each other," Abeyaratne said.

A review of MIT policy regarding mergers, which was recommended by the committee that evaluated the process of the OE merger, will be initiated this spring, said Chair of the Faculty Rafael L. Bras '72. A statement prepared for a special faculty meeting last Nov. 29 by Henrik Schmidt, acting department head of Ocean Engineering, also recommended review of the policy, "to find a better way of weighing fairness and efficiency... so that in the future other colleagues do not go through what we experienced." The statement in particular criticizes the length of the process.

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Tue Jan 18, 4:00pm, Room 4-149
<http://web.mit.edu/eloranta/>

SPORTS

Women's B-Ball Loses 59 to 28

UPCOMING HOME EVENTS

Wednesday, January 12

Varsity Women's Basketball vs. Brandeis University, Rockwell Cage, 7 p.m.

Thursday, January 13

Varsity Women's Ice Hockey vs. Salve Regina University, Johnson Ice Rink, 7 p.m.

Friday, January 14

Varsity Women's Ice Hockey vs. Salve Regina University, Johnson Ice Rink, 7 p.m.

Saturday, January 15

Varsity Men's Track and Field vs. Bates and Coast Guard, Johnson Athletic Center, 12 p.m.

Varsity Men's and Women's Swimming vs. Springfield College, Zesiger Pool, 1 p.m.

Varsity Women's Gymnastics vs. RIC, Ursinus and Wilson, du Pont Gymnasium, 2 p.m.

Tuesday, January 18

Varsity Squash vs. Northeastern University, Zesiger Squash Courts, 7 p.m.

Varsity Men's Ice Hockey vs. Central Connecticut, Johnson Ice Rink, 7:30 p.m.

By Caitlin Murray

STAFF WRITER

The MIT Varsity Women's basketball team lost its conference opener 59–28 Saturday to the Coast

Guard Bears, despite aggressive play and career highs by guard Karen Kinneman '06.

The Bears' Lis Bosma, the game's lead scorer with 21 points, started the scoring 43 seconds into the match with a bucket on a pass from Kira Peterson. The pair connected twice more before the Engineers had put a point on the board. Five and a half minutes into the game, the Engineers had yet to score. Finally, Kimberly Eri Soo Hoo '08 went up for a three pointer and Christa M. Margossian '07 dropped in the rebound to register Tech's first points.

The Bears went on a nine point run later in the first half, resulting in a 12 point lead. Sharon M. Prange '07 ended it by scoring on a lay-up, which sparked MIT's own run. Four minutes before halftime, Soo Hoo sank a long three pointer to narrow the lead to three points, but that was the closest the Engineers would come to taking the lead. The Coast Guard eventually responded and brought the score to 22–15 at the half.

When the teams came back from the break, the Engineers seemed to have resigned themselves to losing, while the Bears were just getting started. Coast Guard brought the lead into the double digits within five minutes, and never relented, ending the game with a 31 point lead.

The Engineers were not passive in this game, despite the score. They

played aggressively, showing some outstanding moves, but could not manage to capitalize. In one move that drew a round of applause from the spectators, Michal A. Ruchelsman '07 reeled in a loose ball by flying headlong off the court while knocking it back towards Kinneman, maintaining possession for MIT.

Later, the Coast Guard's Bosma snagged a ball for possession, using her six feet to easy advantage, but Jasmin Moghbeli '05 dove in and stole the ball and raced back towards the basket.

MIT had eight steals to the Coast Guard's four, but never seemed to make them count. On more than one occasion an Engineer dribbled down the court by herself on a fast break and simply failed to make a shot from right under the basket.

Some of MIT's other stats in the first half were also comparable to the Bears, and did as little good for MIT. Both Kinneman and Jordan E. Wirfs-Brock '06 had career high rebound numbers, with 14 and 8 rebounds respectively. The Engineers as a team came out of the first half with the same number of two point attempts, three pointers scored, and twice as many points off free throws as the Bears.

Not all MIT's stats were so good, however. In the first half, MIT was shooting with 20 percent less accuracy from the field, and was called five times for traveling, while the Bears were called once in the entire game. The Engineers also managed to give the Bears a grand total of 20 free throws in the game, while taking only six.

Height was also a factor in the game. For much of it, Soo Hoo, who

is only 5 feet tall despite her considerable prowess in the game, was guarding the Coast Guard's six foot center Bosma, in man-to-man coverage. The Coast Guard starters stood on average six inches taller than the MIT starters.

One other key stat MIT loses to Coast Guard is coaching experience. The Bears head coach has been coaching his team for ten more years than Kristi Straub, who is in her second year as head coach for the Engineers.

Straub recognized the low field goal percentage, saying, "Scoring is still the challenge. We work incredibly hard and I think defend pretty well. All things considered, we're executing our offense well, getting the ball into the post, getting the ball back out. We're just not hitting shots right now."

Straub expressed her hope for "continued development." The team has struggled with injuries, but Straub says that "once we get this group healthy and have thirteen players available, we're going to be tough to beat."

When asked about last season, which ended in a record low 3–20, Straub answered that "Any time you have a season like that, it's challenging... This season we've already equaled the number of wins we had last year. People were pretty excited going into the holiday break. I know I was."

The Engineers' record now stands at 3–5, with a 0–1 record in the New England Women's and Men's Athletic Conference. They hope for wins this Wednesday and Saturday against Brandeis and Wellesley respectively, to bring their record up to .500 in both conference and non-conference play.

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William Thomas McKinley, "Childhood Memories"
Concerto for Marimba and Orchestra (2004)

Eric Chasalow, Concerning Sunspots (2004)

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Sunday, January 23, 2005

7:30 p.m.

Paine Hall, Harvard University

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Osvaldo Golijov, Mariel (2003)

Pierre Boulez, sur Incises (1999)
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